

97-84166-20

Ricker, Allen W.

Socialism in action

Saint Louis, Mo.

c1912

97-84166-20

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Socialism in action. What socialists want. What socialists are accomplishing where in power. How socialists propose to get possession. By A. W. Ricker ... Saint Louis, Mo., The National rip-saw publishing co., '1912.

30 p. 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (Rip-saw series, no. 9)

1. Socialism.

Library of Congress

Copyright A 312703

HX86.R6

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12-12513/2

9-16

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## TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mmREDUCTION RATIO: 9:1IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA IIA IB IIBDATE FILMED: 8/26/97INITIALS: TLMTRACKING #: 27026

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# Socialism in Action

WHAT SOCIALISTS WANT.  
WHAT SOCIALISTS ARE ACCOM-  
PLISHING WHERE IN POWER.  
HOW SOCIALISTS PROPOSE TO  
GET POSSESSION.



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Box 742

BY A. W. RICKER.

AUTHOR OF

"FREE LOVE AND SOCIALISM,"  
"THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF JESUS,"  
ETC.

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The National Rip-Saw Publishing Co.  
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

Rip-Saw Series No. 9

## Socialism in Action

A Lecture delivered under the Auspices of the National  
Socialist Lyceum Bureau, 1912.

Twelve years ago when I entered the field of Socialist agitation, the best the Socialists could do for a rostrum was a soap box on a street corner, and for an audience, such of the passing throng as stopped to listen to hear what, as they supposed, the "fakir" on the box was saying. Now we get the finest opera houses and auditoriums and the people pay at the door to hear the same message.

We have not changed our message much in these years, nor have we better orators. The change is in the people.

Twelve years ago the Socialists had a struggling organization in a few cities. They had not even dreamed of electing anybody to office. Now, the dues paying party members number 125,000 and the vote is in the millions. We have more than a thousand Socialists holding elective offices and we control the cities of Butte, Mont., Berkeley, Calif., Schenectady, N. Y., New Castle, Pa., Martins Ferry, O., and have a voice in the city councils of many other municipalities. We have one member of Congress and 17 members of State Legislatures.

Since 1860 the country has not been in such political chaos as now. The old parties are torn asunder by contending factions and only the Socialist Party stands out bold and clear in its program. The people are asking on every hand "What is Socialism"? They want to know in the fewest words and clearest language possible.

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Socialism is a word that defines a principle in human relationship. That principle is co-operation. What the Socialists want is the co-operative or social ownership of the means of production and distribution of food, clothing and shelter. These means of production are the mines, shops, factories, railways, warehouses, forests, telegraphs, telephones, and the land itself, which is the primary source of all wealth.

Capitalism is a word that defines a principle in human relationship. This principle is exploitation. By exploitation we mean the use of the labor power of one individual by another, or of one class of people by another.

In an economic sense, exploitation is therefore the automatic and legalized robbery of the working class by the capitalist class.

The capitalist class owns the places where, and the machines with which, the masses work, and by this arrangement the capitalist takes the product the worker makes and hands him back a small part, barely enough to subsist on, which we call wages. How the product of labor is divided can be read in the census returns as well as felt by the workers in their actual misery and distress.

In 1900 there were approximately 16,000,000 homes in this country, of which 4,739,000 were owned free, 2,180,000 mortgaged and 8,246,000 rented. The 1910 census is not complete, but it will show a greater increase in rented homes. Of the strictly wage working class houses in 1903, 8.3 per cent were owned by the wage workers, 10.6 per cent were mortgaged by wage workers, and 81.1 per cent were rented.

In New York City there are reported 736,052 dwellings, of which 617,948 are rented, 48,004 are mortgaged and 71,100 owned by those living in them. In Chicago, 39,246 houses are owned by those living in them, 43,735 are mortgaged and 258,582 are rented. In St.

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Louis, 16,097 are owned by those living in them, 9699 are mortgaged and 90,983 are rented. All other cities show like conditions.

The census report for 1910 on manufactures, including 24 main industries, such as clothing, lumber, bread, furniture, tobacco, etc. shows that there was paid in wages and salaries \$1,625,000,000.00; there was received by capitalist owners as profit \$1,991,372,000.00. In other words the profits of a few owners exceeded the wages of several million workers.

In these eloquent figures you read of the means used for the piling up of millions by the capitalist class, and the misery, want and degradation of those who work. This is exploitation, the principle involved in capitalism. Its means are rent, interest and profit.

Now Socialists want to change the ownership of capital, to take it out of the hands of the capitalist class and vest the title in society. This will end interest, rent, profit, — in short, capitalism, — and give us Socialism.

#### **Social Production, But Private Ownership.**

In less than 75 years the world has experienced greater changes in industries than in all the time that has gone before. In this period, steam, electricity and machinery have come into use. We no longer produce anything individually that we use, nor do we produce what we use in the place or city where we live. I am going to take a simple thing you all use as an illustration. I might take flour, shoes, clothing or a dozen things, but I am going to use potatoes, because I want to refer to a new factor in production, namely, irrigation. In the West and Southwest, including the states of Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming, Arizona, Texas, Utah and New Mexico, there is a soil that is practically inexhaustible, but water is lacking. There is plenty of water in the springtime when the snow is melting on the mountain sides, but it runs away. To use this rich soil simply requires the building of dams and

reservoirs, conserving this water supply and letting it out through irrigation ditches. Under this system, we are beginning to raise root crops and fruit and soon we will produce a large share of our food supplies in this manner, but the capitalist class owns the reservoirs and of course will harvest the profits.

In the South Mississippi Valley the most fertile lands must be drained. Drainage companies are now being organized for the purpose of pumping the water off the land, and these companies will take all the profit of the resulting production.

Follow me now, as I bring to your table a mess of potatoes: First, there is the digging of the irrigation ditch, where men work, using tools they did not make; the building of the dam where other men work with tools they did not make; the farmer plows the ground with a plow he did not make; he harvests the crop with machinery made far away. On his team of horses is a set of harness and when you think of the harness you think of a herd of cattle fed in the feeding yards of Illinois, their being shipped to market and killed by other men using tools they did not make; the hides of these cattle are tanned by another set of men using tools they did not make; the leather is converted into harness by another set of men with tools not made by themselves.

The potatoes are taken to market in a wagon. Making the wagon is a wonderful process, involving the work of many men in all parts of the nation in getting material. We come now to the railroad, and when we think of that, we think of steel rails and then of men standing before fiery forges in the valley of the Ohio and in the shops of the steel trust where every day they risk their lives to produce steel rails. Back of these men are the miners digging the ore, and the coal, using other sets of tools which they did not make. We think of the ties and of men in the forests chopping trees, of the saw-mills

where the ties are sawed; of another set of men spiking the rails to the ties. We think of bridges, gradings, telegraph wires, the instruments the telegraphers use, the track men, switch men, all necessary to the operation of a railroad and the production of potatoes.

Our train is now ready to move. We pass along the cars and think of the wonderful process of producing them. We come to the engine, and a new factor enters, that of coal and when we think of coal, we think of men down in the bowels of the earth where their lives are constantly risked, and where they work with tools, blasting powder, oil, — all used but not made by the users.

The train bearing the potatoes reaches the city where they are to be sold. Then we think of a dry storage house, where they are stored, of the distribution which means delivery wagons. They are finally brought to the house where you live and even that house is a wonderful product, involving as it does, lumber, glass, paint, putty, plaster, cement, etc. Inside of the house the woman's work begins if she has not already been employed elsewhere. There is the vessel in which the potatoes are washed, the knife with which they are pared, a stove on which they are cooked. Perhaps it is a "Kalamazoo direct to you". At suppertime the potatoes are brought to the table and then you think of knives, forks, spoons, dishes and the chair you sit on, the table from which you eat. You convey the tuber to your mouth and begin to chew and then perhaps there is a set of false teeth you did not make. What I want you to see, is that millions of people have co-operated to get you a mess of potatoes, and everything you use comes to you in a similar manner.

Now this is social production. People work co-operatively, but do not own the machinery used in production and distribution. When your potatoes started in Colorado there was a bushel, but when they get to you

there is a "measly" mess, — that is, you paid as much for the mess as the farmer got for the bushel.

An apple grower in Colorado last fall in packing his apples, placed a card in each box giving his name and address and requesting the purchaser to write him how much he paid for the apples. He got many replies. Some paid \$2.00, \$2.25, \$2.50, as high as \$3.00 per box. The farmer issued a form letter replying to each one. He thanked the party for the information and said "I wanted to know how much you paid. I got 20 cents. Yours for Socialism."

A cow hide is worth 13½ cts. a pound. If you will weigh your pair of shoes, you will find you have paid in the finished product from \$1.00 to \$3.00 per pound and then you have some paste board in the soles. Now who gets this difference, between 20 cts. per box of apples and \$3.00 per box; 13½ cts. per pound for cow hide and the \$3.00 for shoes? Some of it, the smaller part, has been paid in wages. The bulk represents profits and in that you have the explanation of the millionaires and billionaires. This is how they got their wealth.

#### The Contrast. Individual Production.

Now our ancestors had no such methods of production and distribution. Way back in the dawn of civilization, they went out in the morning and picked their breakfast from the cocoanut trees. No one owned the trees and they helped themselves. They had not discovered how to make a fire, nor invented weapons to kill game and knew nothing of scratching the soil and making things grow. It was the childhood of the race. They must have marveled at every strange thing they saw. When the earth quaked they naturally came to the conclusion that somebody alive down in the earth was mad and shaking the earth to express his anger. When the lightning flashed, they thought somebody up above was angry and when the waves rolled in from the sea, they thought

somebody out on the waters was moving them. Then they named these different somebodies gods, for they had a god for everything. Finally came the idea of one God and they believed this God made the cocoanuts and the fruits from which they lived. When the supply failed, they thought God was mad and they learned to sacrifice to him, believing they could persuade him to a good humor by killing an animal or even a human being and burning it. Thus originated sacrifice and prayer.

Religion has thus been closely associated with all man's acts, and God has been the natural explanation of all things. Even so late as when our forefathers settled in New England there was little machinery of production or distribution. A ship came their way perhaps once a year. The people had to live from what they could get from the forests and what they could raise on the flinty rocks. There was often famine and as often prayer meetings in which God was asked to send sunshine and rain. Man depended on nature and nature's God for his living..

Now, I am going to shock you. You and I have ceased to ask God for our living, because God doesn't own the things we depend on. We permit these things to belong to Morgan, Rockefeller and the capitalist class, and we ask THEM.

The machinery of production and distribution is just as essential to our lives as the cocoanut tree was to our ancestors. If the cocoanut tree didn't produce any fruit, our ancestors couldn't help it and talked to God about it. If the machinery of production and distribution fails to bring us what we need WE CAN HELP IT, for there is plenty now, and no danger of famine. The only thing that stands in the way of prosperity and security for all is capitalistic ownership of the machinery we all must use and all depend on.

### The Unemployed.

When I started on this lecture tour, I landed in Chicago the coldest day of the year. Before leaving the train, I bought a Chicago Record-Herald, and the first thing that caught my eye was a big headline announcing that Chicago had a hundred and fifty thousand destitute hungry and cold people; that the rescue stations were overrun; the county unable to supply food and fuel and the treasury of the United Charities Association was empty.

Then followed an appeal for public contributions. Ralph Wilder, the cartoonist had drawn a striking picture for the front page. In the left half was a well-kept, prosperous looking capitalist, standing, reading the Record headlines about the distress of the people. He was made to say "That must be pretty tough." He did not know, because he had no experience.

In the right upper half was a thick check book, and in the lower half the address of the Associated Charities Co. with a hand pointing down. Over the whole picture were the words "Act on the Impulse." In other words if you think it tough send a check to the Associated Charities and help relieve the distress. What else under this system could be done for or by these suffering people? They cannot personally beg, — that's against the law. Begging is now systematized by charity organizations — which furnishes good salaries for the beggars. The hungry cannot steal and yet they must be fed.

These people were hungry and cold because they had no work. They had no work because the capitalist class did not need them. The development of labor saving machinery throws men on the scrap heap. The capitalist takes the best and the cheapest laborers and the others join the army of the unemployed to be fed by charity.

When these people worked, they got wages, but the capitalist got the product — which is now represented by

the full check books. Charity now turns and says, "Please good, public spirited capitalist, give some of the product back and feed these hungry people."

The capitalist, tickled by this appeal to his vanity — or influenced by fear of the hungry crowd, responds and the gaunt and shivering masses are kept from death. In every city this same thing has happened.

Now notice that within a hundred miles of Chicago, there are coal mines and coal miners, — machinery for digging and hoisting, railroads with plenty of men to operate them. In Chicago, there are plenty of bins or storage houses, and plenty of wagons and drivers to haul the coal to the shivering people. The same is true of food and clothing supply. Yet all these might as well be in a glass cage, so far as doing the suffering people any good is concerned. Workers do not own the machinery, so workers must beg for a crust of those who do own it. If society owned the mines — railroads and factories, then labor could work them and no person would go hungry for lack of food, be cold for lack of fuel or clothing, or be homeless for want of a house.

Poverty can be abolished in but one way—by the social or collective ownership of the means of life and thus giving an opportunity to all to work.

#### Getting Possession.

"Very well", you say, "we see that, but capitalists own the machinery, tell us how we are going to get possession."\*

Others may advocate different processes, such as applying to its limit the taxing power, building new factories, mills, railroads, etc.—both of which methods may be called into play to a more or less extent—but to complete the revolution, personally I recognize no other ultimate resort but to take them.

\*The National Socialist Platform offers no specific plan for acquiring possession. Socialist Congressman Berger's first bills were proposals for the Government to issue bonds to the capitalists in payment for the trusts.

I see no other way to get possession. The working class cannot buy. We are busted. We have nothing with which to buy the machinery of production and distribution now. We won't have next year, nor will we the year after, for the capitalist automatically takes all we produce and gives us barely enough to live on, so it is not possible for us to accumulate anything with which to buy the capitalist-owned machinery of production and distribution.

Besides, if we were to issue bonds with which to buy the nation's industries, it would load us down with a debt the interest on which would enslave the toilers. It would end in repudiation of the debt, any way, so why talk about buying. Let us be honest at the start and tell the public the truth.

"But," you ask me, "is this right to take the property without compensation?" "Well," I say to you, "tell me what is right?" Is it right to breathe? Is it right to eat? Is it right to wear clothes? Is it right to live in a house? You say, "Yes," but why? "Because it is necessary," you answer. That is correct. Then whatever is socially necessary, is right. The social ownership of this machinery by the people who use it and depend upon it, is necessary; therefore it is right to establish public ownership instead of private monopoly.

So, while the "taking-over" process might be gradual, it amounts to the people taking possession.

Private property began by taking—confiscation. Capitalist governments have followed this method always. Within the last century the Dutch settled South Africa and founded the Boer Republic. They took the land from the Kaffirs and Hottentots. Later they found rich gold and diamond mines in their territory and began to work them. British capitalists looked with covetous eyes on this great wealth and forced their Government to send an army of conquest against the Boers to take the property. All the



"jingo" British applauded. The church approved and sent up prayers to God in the name of Jesus the Nazarene Carpenter, asking the blessing of heaven on British piracy. Only the Socialists protested. The Boers fought gallantly, but lost. Great Britain took the diamond and gold mines, country and all. They "took" it.

A few years ago our Admiral Dewey blew some old Spanish tubs from Manilla Bay. Then we proceeded to "take" the Philippines. The Filipinos objected and they gathered a ragged army under one Aguinaldo to resist. We sent our sterling young manhood to fight for what American capitalists wanted to take. The band played, the flags waved and the Church prayed. In the end we captured Aguinaldo and scattered the army. Then we "took" the Philippines. "This was better for the Filipinos," you say. "Yes, doubtless," but so will it be better for the capitalists when we take their machinery.

Again let us remember that in 1776 the Continental Congress declared this country free and independent of Great Britain. George the Third did not agree to this and he sent such of his army as he could spare to resist our claim and defend his title. We made our declaration good by force of arms and took the country. We celebrate it now, but let us remember that the King had as good a title then as Morgan has to-day.

By the same process the Republican party freed the slaves.

How does Morgan take things? He took \$75,000,000 for trustifying the steel industry—took it from the sweat and blood of labor.

He has recently trustified the automobile industry and has reduced by nearly 50 per cent the wages of the 100,000 employees. By this act he took the bread out of the mouths of children, the clothing off their backs.

How did Weyerhaeuser get his great timber holdings?

It's all right for the capitalists to take things. You're used to that, but for the working class to take things, well, now, that's terrible, isn't it?

Get used to it. We're going to take things when we gain control of the national government, and twenty-five years after it is done the whole world will approve it.

It's simply the difference between before taking and after taking.

Let it be understood that we don't want the private wealth of the capitalist class. We don't want Morgan's palace, his automobile, his art gallery, summer and winter residences, poodle dogs, or his money. We want the factories, shops, mines, railroads which are necessary to our very lives and, by the eternal, we're going to have them.

### Two Boys.

When we get to the taking, it will not be from Morgan, Rockefeller, Carnegie and the present-day owners. These men are passing. It is with the children of the capitalist class we will deal. Here are two children born to the world. When they arrive they look much alike. They are both red and ugly, each is hungry. One is born in the capitalist home, the other in that of the wage worker. In a few minutes after their arrival, however, the similarity ceases.

The child of the rich has beautiful clothing. If his mother cannot nurse him a healthy wet nurse is called. He has every care and attention. As he grows he gets the best of food, clothing and shelter, the best education. His body and mind are well trained and at maturity he steps into fortune and mastership.

The child of the poor has only his mother. His clothing is only such that the wage worker can supply. His education is neglected or uncompleted because he must soon go to work. His food is coarse and sometimes scanty. Early in youth he becomes the wage slave of the

child of the rich. Not once in a thousand times can he escape. Now, that boy on the front seat listening to my speech is not going to concern himself much about the "right" in this case. He will reason that he has a right to live and he knows that the child of the capitalist never earned a brick in the factory or a spike in the railroad. The Socialist movement is harvesting all the youth. Don't you see them? It's the boys and girls that are lighting the fires of the revolution.

The capitalist to-day gets all that he has by taking it from you. He does it according to law and that is the way we propose to take back what we have given him. It makes a great deal of difference how you do a thing. If I meet you in the street and kill you, I will be arrested, sent to jail, tried by a jury, and if I can't buy the judge, sentenced to hang. When I am hung, then I will be dead, just as dead as you are. You notice that when I killed you, I committed a crime. When the state killed me it didn't. I violated the law, but the state did it according to law. That is the difference.

We are going to take possession of the machinery of production and distribution according to law, but we, the working class, are going to make the law and then it will be legal. The fellow who opposes it will be a rebel.

Now, that is the goal of Socialism. If that is too radical for you, then you are not ready to be a Socialist yet, but you will be in time, so don't worry.

#### Public and Private Property.

But at this point you say, "What do you mean by the social ownership of the machinery of production and distribution? Does that include the common ownership of all property? Does it mean that we are going to divide things up?"

Recently while passing through Tennessee, two gentlemen seated opposite me were discussing Socialism. One was a traveling man and the other a Presbyterian

minister. Neither of them understood Socialism, but the preacher was apparently friendly to it. The traveling man said, "There is nothing to this Socialist business. If you would divide up everything to-morrow, in a few years some one would own the bulk of the wealth again." The preacher admitted that this was true, but doubted whether Socialists proposed to divide things up. At this point I butted in with the remark, "Gentlemen, I am a Socialist and have heard a part of your conversation." Turning to the traveling man, I said: "Suppose we would divide up the railroads, what part would you take—a rail, a spike or what?" A sickly grin came to his face as he realized the absurdity of his own position. The same question was asked me by a lawyer in Iowa last winter.

This gentleman had been County Superintendent of Schools when I was a country school teacher and later had served a term as District Judge. Meeting him on the street, I pulled out my watch to find the time, and he, noticing that it looked like a gold watch and knowing I was a Socialist, said to me in a bantering tone: "That is a pretty good watch for a Socialist to carry, isn't it?" "Why shouldn't a Socialist carry a good watch if he can afford it?" I replied. "I thought you people believed in dividing up—that if you have something better than a less fortunate neighbor, you would sell it and divide the proceeds," "You are thinking of Christianity, are you not?" said I. "The Christians preached and practiced that for 300 years, but that was before the church became 'civilized' I did not mean to discuss this question with you, but since you have broached the subject, I am going to explain it to you in a way you will never forget and cannot fail to comprehend. Socialists believe in the common or social ownership of things commonly used, and in the private ownership of things privately or individually used." "How do you distinguish between the two?" he asked. "Well," said I, "we are standing on the street. Who do you believe should own this street, a

private corporation or the people?" "The people," he said. "Why?" I asked. "Because all the people use it, therefore they should own it in common." "Let us take the Post Office," said I; "who should own that—private corporations or the people?" "The people," he said, "and for the same reason that they should own the streets." "What about the schools?" I asked. "The people should own them," he replied, "and precisely for the same reason—because they all use them." You have done famously," said I; "now tell me who should own the water works in this city." Then he backed off, for in that city a private corporation owns the water works and the lawyer had some stock in the corporation. I knew it and had purposely lead him into this trap. "Come, now," said I, "be fair. You know that when people are crowded together in a city, surface water is contaminated and not fit to use. We cannot depend on cisterns, because it does not always rain. We must have a central pumping station and pipes for the distribution of water, but we all use the water. Is it sensible or just to permit private corporations to own something we all must use, and because we must use it permit them to rob all the rest of us?" "Well, according to your theory," he began—"But it is not my theory; it is your own. If the people should own the streets, Post Office, schools, why not the water?" "Well, I will admit you are right," said he. "Very well," I replied, "then apply this same reasoning to lighting plants, central heating plants, ice plants, dry and cold storage houses, slaughter houses, street cars, etc. In the state, apply it to interurban car lines, in the nation to the railroads, coal mines, steel, wire, oil, copper industries, etc. We all use these things, in fact we all must use them; therefore we ought all to own them."

"But what would you own privately?" he asked. "Well," said I, "take this old watch, that was the occasion of your jest. Now, we both couldn't own that watch and get any good out of it. If it were a clock up on a

tower, we could socially own it, but not the watch. I own this watch now, and I would own it under Socialism, or a better one. Take the clothes I am wearing. Such as they are, they were made to fit me. They wouldn't fit you nor look well on you (he was a larger man than I). Your clothes wouldn't look well on me nor would mine on my wife. I own them now and would under Socialism, only I will be sure that they will contain no shoddy. Shoddy does not grow on sheep's backs. Under Socialism we will own the sheep and the pasture if necessary. We certainly will own the mills where the wool is spun into yarn and the yarn woven into cloth. You won't want any shoddy in your clothes, will you?"

"Then let us take the home. Did you ever see a house big enough to hold two families? I would not want to live in a house with another family, not even my mother-in-law. Under the capitalist system most of us live in rented homes and a great many live in dark and dreary tenements, devoid of sunshine and air, cold and unhealthy in winter, and where neither sanitary laws nor those of decency may be observed.

"Under Socialism we will own our own homes, because we will own the material with which the homes are made, and we will own all things privately that people ought to own individually, and own all things socially that require social ownership. We will have just as much and it will be just as good as the amount of labor we choose to put into the things we want."

Socialism has been dealing with principles in the past twelve years, but now we are beginning to deal with details. We will settle details as we get to them, but we will settle them according to our rule of social ownership of things socially used and private ownership of things privately used. We will doubtless make a great many mistakes as we begin to apply these principles, but we will succeed, because we **must** succeed. We will prove all

things and hold fast that which is good, just as sensible people always do when they have a chance.

Our greatest strength lies in the fact that the Socialist movement is as widespread as the earth and our program is worldwide. The experience of our European comrades is at the disposal of America. If applied Socialism works in one place it will work in all places.

### **Socialism Inevitable.**

We Socialists believe that Socialism is inevitable. We base this on two things. First, public ownership and democratic control of industry is necessary to the lives and happiness of the vast majority of the people, and, second, it is desirable.

The human race does not make a great revolutionary change until it is necessary. It never has and it never will. Humanity prefers to submit rather than to put forth sufficient energy to revolt, and does the latter only when it can endure its position no longer.

I can illustrate this in a very homely manner by two cows. The first cow represents humanity disposed to submit rather than struggle, the second shows what people will do under the influence of pain and distress. The first cow belonged to me. She laid down on a hillside on a summer afternoon and died. She was a healthy cow and I could not understand it. The young farmer boy who was working for me explained it. He said the cow laid down with her head down hill, and, as you know, a cow gets up with her hind quarters first. She could have gotten up, but only by a severe struggle. It was easier to die—so she died. People would submit to capitalism if they could, but they can't. They are like the second cow. Both hind legs of this one went through the ice. She could have struggled out, but it was easier to lie down than to struggle, so down she went, and might have stayed there till the crack of doom, but her owner came along and changed the situation. He knew the cow could

get up, so he proceeded to apply pain. Having no whip or pitchfork, he used a means known to every farmer. He took hold of her tail and began to twist it. Presently the cow moved. It was at the time when the desire in her mind to move on account of the pain was greater than the desire to lie still.

I think you see the application. Every move of capitalism to make profits brings misery, pain and distress to the people. The workers will stand this for a while; then, like the cow, they will begin to move. This, more than anything else, explains why I get people to auditoriums now, where twelve years ago they wouldn't listen on street corners.

### **The Clash of Interests.**

The second reason why Socialism is inevitable is that it appeals to the best interests of fully 80 per cent of the population. I am going to draw a line here on the stage and make it the division point between those who will want Socialism when they understand it and those who will oppose it. On one side are those who have a selfish interest in maintaining capitalism and on the other those who have a selfish interest in establishing Socialism. Here, on the extreme left, is the big capitalist class, "big business," Roosevelt calls it. Its numbers do not exceed 100,000, and at the top of the heap are Morgan, Rockefeller and a few others, managing the whole thing.

Now we pass over to the other side of the line. Go to the extreme right. Here we have the wage-working class, 80 per cent living in rented houses—who own no property. Before they can eat, wear clothes, or live in a house, they must get money. To get that money, they must go to the capitalist class and sell themselves for wages. The capitalist class will buy them only on condition of robbing them and will buy no more than can be used.

All do not get a job, and so some are constantly tramping and begging. Many women cannot get jobs and these become prostitutes. Perhaps there are a million such. You readily see that this 50 per cent of the population have nothing to lose but the chains of wage slavery, while they have everything to gain. Right next to them I place the tenant farmers, of whom there are 2,000,000. Two hundred and thirty-nine thousand of these are in Texas alone, raising cotton. Their possessions usually consist of a team of mules (often a single mule), a wagon and plow, a dog, an overworked wife, little cotton pickers (children), and a few battered household and farming utensils. These people have nothing to lose but their chains. They have everything to gain. Next to them I place the small and mortgaged farmers. They have a little property—nothing of any consequence. Then I come to the professional classes, that rise through various grades, and other small interests until I strike the line, and I cross this again to the business men, small manufacturers, the hired lawyers and the class that capitalism pays fairly well for helping to exploit the producers.

According to the census figures, there are 20 per cent on the left of the line who profit by the capitalist system and who will not want to give it up. On the other side of the line are 80 per cent who will be materially benefited by Socialism. There is not much emigration from the 80 per cent to the 20 per cent—a few now and then—but there is a constant flow from the 20 per cent over to the 80 per cent side, due to trustification and concentration. At the present rate of progress this line will move far over in ten years, until 10 per cent will profit by capitalism and 90 per cent will lose.

It is inevitable that when the 80 per cent discover where their economic interests lie they will organize both industrially and politically to take possession of the ma-

chinery they are using, but do not own. It will not require any great degree of intelligence to see this, because all the while the twisting process, the pain of the system, will be prompting the workers to act. When the 80 per cent find out, there will be "something doing."

### Object Lessons.

Now, there is one third thing that helps on the Revolution. This is the object lessons furnished by Socialist administrations. People will accept what they can see much quicker than when they can reason the thing out. Consequently the capture of political power in towns, counties and cities by Socialists and its intelligent use will furnish such object lessons as will greatly hasten the end.

People are always suspicious of what they do not understand.

Every invention has been ridiculed by the ignorant at first. When the railroad came, the ignorant land owners along the route protested that the shriek of the ternal engine would dry up the cows and scare the chickens out of the spring crop of eggs. Nobody does this now.

When the first self-binder was set up on the platform of a country dealer, and a group of farmers gathered round, there were some funny things said. In my mind's eye, I can see them squinting one eye and looking wise. They shook their heads, saying, "Too much machinery, too complicated. Never make her work." But a few farmers bought the machines. They worked, and then the others all wanted them. So with the cream separator, the steam shovel, the steam plow, and perhaps soon the airship.

How many times do you read in old party papers, "Socialism is a beautiful theory, but impractical?"

It takes so much brains to say that—exactly as much as it took to criticise the binder.

Socialism, as a principle, will work just as the binder worked. Co-operation is an economic machine, just as superior to competition as the binder is to the sickle.

Our political system, which gives local self-government to states, cities, counties and townships, enables us to apply the principle of Socialism to other things just as it has been applied to streets, roads, parks, schools and the postal system.

We are beginning to elect the public officials in these smaller subdivisions of the nation—and here we are beginning to apply our program.

I am going to tell about Socialist administrations. One or two of these will serve as well as a hundred. Perhaps the best is in Crawford County, Kansas, where I live. Here, in Washington Township, where 3000 coal miners live, two years ago the Socialists elected the township ticket, two Justices of the Peace, two Trustees, and two Constables. This gave us political power within the boundary of the township. How did we use it? In 1911 the Kansas Legislature enacted a poll tax law, whereby a tax of \$3.00 per head was levied on every male citizen between the ages of 21 and 50. You see, this is just like a dog tax. Taxing a man because he is a man is on a par with taxing a dog because he is a dog. The object of this poll tax was to get money to make better roads for automobile drivers. We Socialists maintained that the wage workers, having no automobiles or vehicles, ought not to be forced to pay for something they do not use. Therefore we decided in Washington Township not to pay the tax. Having all the offices, we could simply have refused to collect it, and that would have settled it, but this would have been ignoring the law, and we wanted to do it according to law. It so happened that when the legislature passed the poll tax law, they did it in an unconstitutional

manner. The Constitution of Kansas requires that a bill on its third and final reading in the Legislature must be read section by section. The Legislature of Kansas remains in session but fifty days, and if it holds over this time, it must be at the expense of the legislators. Drawing as they do but \$150.00 per term, they usually adjourn, but when the last day came there were still fifty bills unpassed. So they had a joint session, and fifty men stood up and read the fifty bills in concert, like a lot of geese gabbling. After a little while somebody moved to pass them all as a whole. It was seconded, nobody objected, and fifty bills were thus passed in violation of the Constitution. However, the clerk recorded on the journal that they had been passed regularly, and thus it became an official record. Of course, he lied, but by the twisting of capitalist law this lie became a truth. For way back yonder some old musty judge had decided that an undisputed written record is final testimony in a suit at law and that oral evidence may not be introduced to refute it. This would go in a capitalist court, but not in a Socialist court.

J. I. Shepherd of Ft. Scott, the attorney for the Appeal to Reason, instructed the Socialist Trustees of Washington Township to serve legal notices on a miner to work the road tax and at the same time have the miner refuse. This person was then arrested by a Socialist Constable on a warrant sworn out before a Socialist Justice of the Peace and a day set for trial. We attacked the law, both on constitutional grounds and that of justice. We summoned two members of the Legislature, a Republican and a Democrat, who told the truth as to how the bill was passed. The lawyers made their pleas, and the Socialist Justice of the Peace, Judge Phillips, of Curranville, Kansas, declared the law unconstitutional and discharged the miner. By this means the miners of that township saved themselves \$9000.00 in cash. The Trustees then levied the road tax on the property of the operators, who bene-



fit by the roads, for they own all the land in the township, and made them pay it.

Now, this was an object lesson both to the miners in the township, who saved themselves \$3.00 apiece, and to those outside the township, who still had to pay the poll tax, simply because they had no working-class court to set aside the law.

We didn't stop there. We have mining laws in Kansas, but they were never enforced. Under the Kansas laws, the coal miners elect the State Mine Inspector from their own union. The men had been electing Republicans and Democrats, but these persons had never done anything, not because they were dishonest, but because they did not know how, for one thing, and had no friendly court in which to prosecute, for another.

In January, 1911, the miners elected a Socialist to this office and later they elected Socialist District Officials in the Union. We now had Socialist District Officers, a Socialist Mine Inspector and political power in the township. Things began to happen. We used our Socialist courts to compel the mine operators to fix the roofs on the shacks, clean up the bath houses, prop the mine chambers, pump the water out and the air in. For the first time in the history of the State of Kansas there was a serious attempt to enforce the mining laws, with some considerable success, all because we had Socialists in office and political power.

These object lessons are going to enable us to carry the county. When we do our power will be enlarged. We will have the Sheriff, who will be a handy officer; the County Attorney and later the County Judges and the Board of Supervisors, which latter will give us control of the county bridges, roads, etc. We can cut out the graft and furnish some employment at union hours and union wages. We will have charge later of the Poor House and Poor Farm, which we will turn into a respectable retreat

for those who are so unfortunate as to reach it. Under the law, we can build and equip a County Hospital, where good sanitarium treatment can be furnished at cost, or free when necessary, to the unfortunates, especially to those who are crippled in the mines.

Now that is about all we can do under the present State laws in Kansas.

Some of our officers draw a big salary. Will we allow the office holders to draw big salaries, as do the Republicans and Democrats? No. If we did, we would soon train a bunch of courthouse politicians, who would twist and turn and compromise just as do the Republicans and Democrats. We will probably pay these men a maximum wage and require them to turn the balance of their salary into the Socialist Party treasury, to be used to educate the people. Our trade union friends have made the great mistake of electing men from jobs paying \$15.00 to \$20.00 per week to official positions with salaries of from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year. While holding those jobs and living much better than those who pay them, they acquire a fondness for Manhattan cocktails, and nothing suits them so well as to get their feet under the table at Delmonico's and clink glasses with Pierpont Morgan and the capitalist exploiters of labor in the Civic Federation banquets.

We will grant no such sinecures in the Socialist Party. We do not believe in low wages, but, on the contrary, we do not believe in exploiting the poorly paid to give ease and comfort to a few. This is capitalism and must not be practiced by Socialists. Now, this is nothing new. They have been doing this in Milwaukee from the start. Every Socialist official in Milwaukee County pays a portion of his salary into the Party Treasury. No one assumes to act as boss in Milwaukee. Every measure proposed by the Socialists is first threshed out by the party and decided on. This gives democratic manage-

ment and secures the collective wisdom of the entire organization.

Under Socialism we will have democratic management of industries. The people will elect the managers and overseers, and we are putting into practice in our party just what we expect to put in practice in the factory under Socialism.

Every expert in civic affairs who has investigated Milwaukee has pronounced it the best administrated city in America. The opposition accuse the Socialists of Milwaukee of party rule—of party bossism. It is true, but it is the rank and file—the party membership—not a few ringsters—who do the bossing.

#### **Municipal Program of Socialism.**

Now it ought to be clear to you that we cannot establish Socialism when we capture a city, or county. We can only put so much of our program into operation as the existing state and national laws will permit, but there is one important thing we can do—that is just the opposite of what the capitalist class is doing. We have some good laws on our statute books, but capitalist judges and capitalist lawyers stretch these laws in the interest of the capitalist class. When we get possession of the courts, either small or great, we will take these same laws and use them in the interest of the working class. We will use our political power and the police power to protect the workers, just as capitalist administrations now use these powers against the workers and to protect the capitalist class.

Socialist administrations are valuable as object lessons, and as training schools where we train ourselves in the administration of public affairs, gain confidence in our ability as workers to do administration work, and furnish that element of hope which the working class needs to inspire it with courage.

In cities where the charter laws permit, we will apply our program of social ownership of water works, light and heat plants, ice plants, slaughter houses, dry and cold storage plants. We will build houses to be rented or sold to the working class on a basis of cost, etc., etc.

We will provide sanitation, factory inspection, safety appliance laws, etc.

We reduce administration to an honest cost system, and remove the graft. As we get possession of the schools, we throw the buildings open to the public and make them public centers. We change the educational system to conform to the industrial life—less of the useless and more of the useful. We make amusements a public concern. We raise the standard of things, and the self-respect of the worker. We encourage him to hope, expect, and work for, a better day.

Have we done these things anywhere? Yes, we have provided Milwaukee\* with sanitary inspection that is not a farce but a reality.

We have made the factory owners clean up their shops and provide ventilation and safety appliances. Food products have been made to conform to sanitary regulations, especially milk, bread and meat, three of the most filthily handled things that people use.

We have regulated weights and measures. We have gone into the houses with trained nurses and taught working women how to care for their babies.

We have given the city the first bureau of economy and efficiency ever established in America.

We have provided the people with decent and wholesome amusements in the city auditorium in winter and the parks in summer.

We have raised the wages of the most poorly paid city employes.

\*The remarks about the Milwaukee Socialist administration were made while the Socialists were in control. The Republican and Democratic machines merged under the name "non-partisan" and succeeded in defeating the Socialists since, although the Socialist vote showed a large increase.



We have driven the grafters from the purchase of city supplies and the building of street paving.

We have aided the unions in their struggle for shorter hours and better pay.

Milwaukee gave the nation its first Socialist Congressman, and he has been the sharpest thorn that ever entered the calloused side of American capitalism. Berger has been on the job, acting for the great American working class, and he is the only one in Congress working intelligently for the common welfare.

His old age pension bill was the first ever proposed in America. Socialist agitation has won old age pensions over most of Europe. Ours is the tardiest civilized nation in the world in remedial labor legislation. We are beginning to get something now as the Socialist Party grows in power and, through its elected officials, enters the halls of legislation. Berger's forcing of an investigation of the Lawrence strike marks a new epoch in our history. To the presence of the Socialists in the Wisconsin Legislature is due her labor laws, that are better than those of any other state.

In Berkeley, California, a staid old college town, where the Socialist Mayor, Stitt Wilson, presides, we are turning the public schools and even the university into helpful and useful channels.

In Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania and North Dakota Socialist representatives have broken into the legislatures and the working class now has a voice at "court."

When the smoke of election battle clears away after each campaign it is found that we are no longer a voice crying in the wilderness, but that we are in the temple of justice, chastising the money changers.

Labor's long night is breaking—the dawn is ahead.

### Political and Industrial Organization.

But while we fight for every inch of political power we can gain, let it be understood that we do not depend on our political arm alone. We are urging the workers everywhere to "join the union," which is the workers' industrial weapon, used to gain shorter hours, longer pay and better working conditions. We are teaching the solidarity of labor and urging the workers to close up the ranks and unite on the industrial field. Intelligent trade unionists realize that industrial unionism must soon take the place of craft organization. The workers must tie themselves together in big industrial unions, so that when it is necessary to strike we can strike with a force and power that will compel consideration of our needs.

Our hope of emancipation is organization, both political and industrial. We have the numbers and in those numbers is our strength. The capitalists are mighty, simply because they are organized and stand together. They know no politics but capitalist politics. The Republican and Democratic parties are alike to them so long as these parties serve their ends. The capitalist class can change its politics overnight.

Somewhere along the line the capitalist class pays the bills of the two old parties. Not long since, Senator Culbertson of Texas in a speech in the Senate stated that the Republicans raised \$5,000,000 to finance Taft's campaign, and charged that the money was contributed by exactly 12,000 people. Then he said, with great pride: "We Democrats raised only \$700,000.00 for Bryan's campaign, which was contributed by 74,000 people." He thought this was wonderfully democratic.

In the Socialist Party are now 125,000 men and women who pay dues every month, and the organization is growing with great rapidity. The 12,000 rich men who paid the expenses of Taft's campaign own the Republican party, because they paid the bills. The 74,000 rich men

who paid the Democratic campaign expenses, for the same reason own the Democratic party. Precisely for the same reason the 125,000 "common people" own the Socialist Party, and with few exceptions they are all working men and women. They finance the Socialist Party out of their meager earnings, but they do it willingly and gladly, because they realize that this is the only means of gaining liberty.

This is a class struggle and the workers will never get more than they are able to take. Nobody will give us anything. We must take it and to get it we must organize.

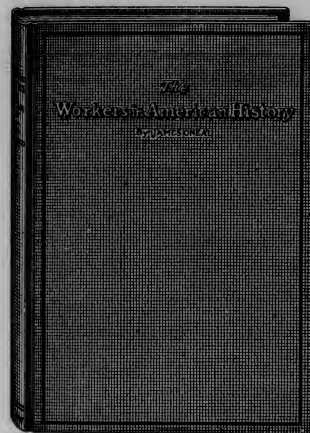
If you believe in Socialism, then you want to work for it, and the way to work for it is to join the Socialist local. United, you are powerful; divided, you are powerless. Again, in the historic words of Marx, I want to say to you: "Workingmen, unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains, you have all the world to gain."



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